



# BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION  
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
(518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
QUAD \_\_\_\_\_  
SERIES \_\_\_\_\_  
NEG. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: Cynthia Howk DATE: Dec., 1994

YOUR ADDRESS: 133 S. Fitzhugh St.  
Rochester, NY 14608 TELEPHONE: 546-7029

ORGANIZATION (if any): The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc.

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## IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Cole-Morgan House
2. COUNTY: Monroe TOWN/CITY: Greece VILLAGE: ---
3. STREET LOCATION: 231 Elmgrove Road (opposite Staub Rd.)
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public ☐ b. private ☒
5. PRESENT OWNER: Ruth M. Morgan ADDRESS: (same) Rochester, NY 14626
6. USE: Originals: farm/residence Present: residence
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐  
Interior accessible: Explain private residence

## DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☒ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐  
e. cobblestone ☐ f. shingles ☐ g. stucco ☐ other: composition board  
Roof= asphalt shingles. Foundation = fieldstone; concrete block
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☒ rear porch addition.  
b. wood frame with light members ☐  
(if known) c. masonry load bearing walls ☐  
d. metal (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
e. other \_\_\_\_\_
10. CONDITION: a. excellent ☒ b. good ☐ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site ☐ b. moved ☒ if so, when? 1800's  
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):  
(see continuation sheet)

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:

"This looks somewhat like a Greek Revival house, although it doesn't have the characteristic Greek Revival roof and eaves. It does have that little frieze window and certainly a Greek Revival style porch. It has, however, been modified and lost some of its character. But in spite of the modifications, it's certainly a 'green.'" P.Malo.

COLOR CODE

Green





14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known ☒ b. zoning ☐ c. roads ☐  
d. developers ☐ e. deterioration ☐  
f. other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:  
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☒  
d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐ f. greenhouse ☐  
g. shop ☐ h. gardens ☐  
i. landscape features: deciduous & coniferous trees  
j. other: small house moved to site in 1893 (S. of main residence)
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):  
a. open land ☒ b. woodland ☒  
c. scattered buildings ☒  
d. densely built-up ☐ e. commercial ☐  
f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒  
h. other: Greece Park to west.
17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:  
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

(see continuation sheet)

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

(see continuation sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: c. 1852

ARCHITECT: not determined

BUILDER: not determined

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

(see continuation sheet)

21. SOURCES: (see continuation sheet)

22. THEME: agricultural: farmhouse and outbuilding

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11c.

Composition siding added over original wood clapboards (post-World War II).

Rear summer porch (west elevation) was removed in the 1950s and the present one-story, gabled, enclosed porch was constructed on the earlier foundation. Contemporary metal awnings are on the porch windows.

On the south elevation, the three-part window bay and the bracketed, Italianate, entrance hood appear to be c. 1870s-80s additions. Contemporary concrete exterior steps at the south entrance.

The wrought iron railings on the front steps are contemporary additions.

The small residence on the south side of the driveway was moved to this site (from #159 Elmgrove Rd) c. 1893 and converted into a residence. Wood shingle cladding, 8/8 double hung windows, box window bay, and porch appear to have been added (c. 1890s?). The interior was converted into residential space, as well.

17. This mid 19th-century vernacular house and the adjacent late 19th-century residence (to the south) are located on a 2.3 acre lot on the west side of Elmgrove Road in the southwest quadrant of the town. They are situated on a knoll and maintain a deep set-back from the road. A driveway is located to the southeast of the main house. A non-contributing 20th-century garage is located southwest of the main house. The property includes many mature deciduous and coniferous trees. Greece Canal Park, owned by the county, borders this property to the west. The surrounding neighborhood includes a few scattered historic farmhouses and many post-World War II ranch and split level houses.

18. This c. 1852 gabled, frame farmhouse features a two-story front gable with one-story, side-wing plan. The front-gabled block is two bays wide by three-bays deep. The side-gabled block is six bays wide and two-bays deep. The house stands on a fieldstone foundation. Exterior walls which are now clad in composition single siding were originally covered with clapboard (intact underneath). The fenestration is regular and symmetrical with 6/6, double-hung sash. Five of



18. continued

the facade windows are flanked by long, louvered wood shutters. Solid wood panels are located below the first-story facade windows. A small frieze window is located under the south eave of the main two-story section. The south elevation includes two c. 1870s-80s additions: an angled window bay with long 6/6 windows and a shed-roofed entrance hood with decorative Italianate wood support brackets.

The recessed porch is located on the facade (east elevation) of the wing. The porch features square Greek Revival posts with simple capital trim.

A one-story rear wing extends from the west elevation of the side wing. This enclosed porch includes a gabled roof, concrete block chimney and modern casement windows. This addition was constructed on the foundation of the previous summer porch, which was demolished in the 1950s.

The present owner reports that the interior of the house includes a parlor ("never remodeled"), several plank doors (into bedrooms), and no fireplaces (the house was heated with stoves; the covered stove pipe holes are still visible). The parlor ceiling is higher than the other rooms in the house. Originally, in the kitchen, there was a hand pump, which was connected to the well.

Originally, the main residence was located closer to the road. Because of the many springs in that area, it was moved back to this present site atop the knoll.

A cast iron well pump is located beside the south entrance and just in front (east) of the steps.

The adjacent residence (south side of the driveway) was moved to this site c. 1893. Originally, it was a carriage house at the Murphy property at #159 Elmgrove Road. They moved it via horses, who pulled it over logs to this site. The north elevation of this house was originally the front of the carriage barn (as evidenced by the surviving steeply-pitched gable here). The carriage house was then refurbished as a residence. It appears that most of the siding, window configuration, front porch with turned posts, shutters, and interior layout were acquired after that time.

The original barns for this property were demolished in the late 1940s-'50s. There was a large gable barn (foundations

18. continued

still exist west of the house). There was smaller barn that was called "the blacksmith shop;" it was here that the family did repairs to their farm equipment.

20. The Cole-Morgan house is architecturally significant as a distinctive example of a vernacular, mid 19th-century farmhouse with Greek Revival details. This farm property, with its 2.3 acres and two residences, is historically significant as well, as an important visual reminder of the town's agricultural heritage.

This front-wing-and-side-gable house is representative of the typical vernacular farmhouse built in Greece during the mid-19th century. Although the house has had some changes, it retains much of its basic form, massing and vernacular detailing. The removal of the contemporary siding and the restoration of the wood clapboards would increase the architectural significance of this house.

The house is first shown on the 1852 county map with "Abrah. Cole" listed as owner (Abraham Cole). The 1872 county map shows this property as lot 142. A house is shown and "A.Cole" is listed as owner. Staub Road has not been laid out and only scattered buildings with large tracts of open land are shown here north of the South Greece hamlet. No outbuildings are indicated on the 1872 map.

The 1902 county map shows this house as part of a 76-acre farm owned by Elizabeth Cole. No outbuildings are shown on this map. The 1924 map shows this site as a 74.75-acre farm owned by the "A.Cole Heirs." The main house and one frame outbuilding are shown. Elmgrove Road is listed as "South Greece Road" and Staub Road has been laid out.

Miss Ruth Morgan, the present owner, reports that her father purchased this property from the Cole family in 1923. The Cole and Morgan families were acquainted with each other through their membership in the Greece Baptist Church.

Information about the house and its history was given to Miss Morgan's mother by Julia Payne Hart. Her nephew, George Payne, owned property at the southeast corner of Elmgrove and Staub Roads (as well as a large farm at 64 Payne Beach Road). It was Mrs. Hart who informed the Morgans that their house was originally closer to the road, but was moved back to its

20. continued

current site because of springs in the area. Mrs. Hart also described the history of the smaller 19th-century residence next to the driveway, its former location at #159 Elm Grove and the method of moving it to this site (via horses and over logs). When the elder Cole sister married c. 1893, this building was moved here and converted into a residence for her and her new husband.

The Morgan family were truck farmers. They raised fruit (apples) and vegetables (celery, etc.). They took produce to the city's public market, where they had a sales stall. The family would prepare the produce (wash it, box it up), then drive it to the market in their Model-T truck. Just after World War I, they bought a car from Judge's Motors and a new truck from McCall Motors. In the winter they would have chains and a pick axe in the vehicles, in case they got stuck in the snow. To help keep themselves warm (there was no heater), they kept all of the old horse robes (blankets) in the car. Miss Morgan recalls how she and her sister would bundle up under the mountain of robes in an attempt to stay warm.

Modern amenities came to the farm slowly. The house was heated by means of coal-burning stoves. Every room had a stove when the Morgans moved in. While some had "chunk" stoves (burned large chunks of wood), this house was heated by coal. In the 1940s, they converted to "rice" coal (a finer grade of coal). Miss Morgan estimates that the house was electrified in the late 1920s. She described the old vacuum light bulbs and the unique sound they made when broken - "if you threw them on a rock, they'd 'pop' like a firecracker!"

Miss Morgan was eight years old when her family moved here in 1923. When she was ready for high school, she rode the inter-urban electric trolley into Spencerport (attended Spencerport High School). She described the trolley station at S. Greece hamlet as a "fancy station with heat!" The trolley was a great convenience and allowed the students to have a flexible schedule. There were trolleys quite often and they could always catch the next one if they missed the earlier car. To their chagrin, the more rigidly-scheduled school bus replaced the electric trolley in 1931. Miss Morgan graduated from Spencerport High School in 1932.

The nearest community center was the hamlet at South Greece.

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Here, the Erie Canal crossed under Elmgrove Road. Residents often considered "canalers" to be "unsavory" and the tug boat crewmen "unsafe." "Don't stop at the canal on your way home from school" was a warning frequently given to the Morgan children by their mother. This warning was reinforced by an incident of theft. One of the Morgan neighbors had sheets stolen from the wash line in their yard. The sheets were later found stuffed inside a stove on one of the canal boats docked at South Greece.

The 1930 suburban directory shows John H. and Elma Morgan here; he is listed as a "farmer." As the town became more suburbanized, many of the farms ceased operation. Two barns on this property were demolished in the late 1940s - early 1950s. Their stone foundations, however, remain. In the 1950s, the rear summer workshed (west elevation of the house) was removed and the present enclosed porch built. The 1959 county map shows this site with the main house, the smaller residence to the south at #237 and three outbuildings: a large, ell-plan barn and two small frame buildings. R.M. and E.J. Morgan are listed as the owners of this 58-acre parcel.

Additional information about the Elmgrove neighborhood is available from Shirley Cole (Mrs. Edward) Murphy. She is related to the Cole family who previously owned the property at #231 Elmgrove Road. Her father was building inspector for the town of Greece for many years. She has old photos and documents regarding #160 Elmgrove Rd. (Kenyon home - her father's mother's family). Shirley Murphy resides just north of here on Shirley Terrace - developed by her family and named for her!

Currently, Miss Ruth Morgan, a retired teacher from Irondequoit School District, lives in the main residence and her sister resides in the adjacent former carriage house at 231 Elmgrove Road.

21. See final report for bibliography; phone interviews with Ruth Morgan and Shirley Cole Murphy, 1/1995.





